

SBA Contracting Certifications

There are several self-certifications available to small businesses to build their potential to successfully compete in the federal sector.

Women-Owned Small Businesses & Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Businesses

<http://1.usa.gov/12p7m68>

The Women-Owned Small Business Federal Contract Program authorizes contracting officers to set aside certain federal contracts for eligible women-owned small businesses (WOSBs) or Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Businesses (EDWOSBs).

To be eligible, a firm must be

- At least 51% owned and controlled by one or more women, and primarily managed by one or more women.
- The individual(s) that have majority ownership and control must be U.S. citizens.
- The firm must be “small” in its primary industry in accordance with SBA’s size standards for that industry. For more information, visit <http://1.usa.gov/1FKJw0P>.
- In order for a WOSB to be deemed “economically disadvantaged,” its owners must demonstrate economic disadvantage in accordance with the requirements set forth in the final rule.
- While both WOSBs and EDWOSBs may be eligible to receive award of contracts in WOSB industries, only EDWOSBs are eligible to receive the award of contracts in EDWOSB industries.

Participation in the program is divided into two phases over nine years: a four-year developmental stage and a five-year transition stage.

Certificates of Competency

<http://1.usa.gov/1lc3GkW>

The Certificate of Competency (COC) program allows a small business to appeal a contracting officer’s determination that it is unable to fulfill the requirements of a specific government contract on which it is the apparent low bidder. When the small business applies for a COC in writing, SBA industrial and financial specialists conduct a detailed review of the firm’s capabilities to perform on the contract. If the business demonstrates the ability to perform, the SBA issues a COC to the contracting officer requiring the award of that specific contract to the small business.

Pro tip: The COC program is carried out by a specialized SBA field staff of individuals with technical, engineering, and government procurement backgrounds in cooperation with financial specialists, also of the field organization.

Small Disadvantaged Business Certification

<http://1.usa.gov/1bPkj3W>

Since October 2008, small businesses can self-represent their status as a small disadvantaged business (SDB). A business does not have to submit an application to SBA for SDB status.

To self-represent as an SDB, a business should register in the System for Award Management (SAM). However, the business must still understand the SBA eligibility criteria for SDBs. Generally, this means that:

- The firm must be 51% or more owned and control by one or more disadvantaged persons.
- The disadvantaged person or persons must be socially disadvantaged and economically disadvantaged.
- The firm must be small, according to SBA’s size standards

Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business

SBA.gov/SDVOSB

The Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Concern Program establishes the criteria to be used in federal contracting to determine:

- Service-disabled veteran status
- Business ownership and control requirements
- Guidelines for establishing sole source and set-aside procurement opportunities
- Protest and appeal procedures for SDVOSBC procurements.

In order to be eligible for the SDVOSBC, you and your business must meet the following criteria:

- The Service Disabled Veteran (SDV) must have a service-connected disability that has been determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs or Department of Defense
- The SDVOSBC must be small under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code assigned to the procurement
- The SDV must unconditionally own 51% of the SDVOSBC
- The SDV - or in the case of an SDV with permanent and severe disability, the spouse or permanent caregiver of the veteran - must control the management and daily operations of the SDVOSBC
- The SDV must hold the highest officer position in the SDVOSBC